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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, ARTS AND LIBRARIES  
LANSING

DR. WILLIAM M. ANDERSON  
DIRECTOR

August 2007

To all Public Libraries, Head Start Programs, Michigan School Readiness Programs, and Public Schools with grades K-2:

Welcome to Michigan Reads!, the one-state, one-children's book program presented by the Library of Michigan with generous sponsorship from Target. The featured book for 2007 is *Big Chickens*, written by Michigan resident Leslie Helakoski and illustrated by Henry Cole. **We encourage everyone statewide to read *Big Chickens* with children during the month of September.**

*Big Chickens* follows four timid chickens on a humorous romp through the woods, as they manage to overcome obstacles and ultimately conquer their fears. For more information about this book and author Leslie Helakoski, visit <http://www.helakoskibooks.com>.

Michigan Reads! 2007 will kick off with the Target Children's Book Festival, presented by Target and the Detroit Free Press, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Aug. 25th at Kensington Metropark in Milford. During the month of September, author Leslie Helakoski will tour the state, presenting Michigan Reads! sponsored programs at libraries and schools. The schedule is listed on the back of this letter.

The Library of Michigan is pleased to present to you this kit of Michigan Reads! materials. We hope that you will be able to share the book with the children with whom you work and use the enclosed materials to promote early childhood literacy and the enjoyment of reading via the Michigan Reads! program.

The contents of this kit are:

- A hardcover copy of the book, *Big Chickens* (Leslie Helakoski);
- The Programming and Resource Guide (produced specifically for Michigan Reads! 2007);
- A brochure on early literacy for parents and caregivers (FACT Coalition);
- Reproducible tips for parents and caregivers from Reading Is Fundamental, Inc.
- A set of stickers to give to kids as they participate;
- A poster for your library or classroom on which kids can write their name as they listen to or read the story;
- An insert on starting a book club (by Target).

Program materials and other resources are also available on the Michigan Reads! web site at <http://www.michigan.gov/michiganreads>. This web site will also have an evaluation survey in which we encourage your participation.

Michigan Reads! began in 2004 as a new approach to the community-wide, "one book" programs gaining popularity throughout the country. While most of these efforts focus on adults or teens, Michigan Reads! is unique in that it aims to boost early-childhood literacy by featuring a book geared specifically toward young children. The program aims to



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promote the value and benefits of reading early and often to children, to encourage family bonding through reading and to increase awareness and usage of Michigan's public and school libraries as excellent resources for learning.

Yours truly,

Nancy R. Robertson  
State Librarian

**Michigan Reads! Author tour**

Leslie Helakoski will be at the following locations in September. A program for grades K-2 will begin at 10 a.m. and a preschool program (3-5 year-olds) will begin at 11:30 a.m.

Portage District Library	Portage	September 7, 2007
Capital Area District Library (Haslett Br.)	Lansing	September 11, 2007
Allendale Public Schools	Allendale	September 14, 2007
Bayliss Public Library	Sault Ste. Marie	September 17, 2007
Traverse Area District Library	Traverse City	September 19, 2007
Flint Public Library (10 a.m. only - all ages)	Flint	September 20, 2007
Detroit Public Library	Detroit	September 27, 2007
Ann Arbor District Library	Ann Arbor	September 28, 2007

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Michigan Reads! 2007 is a program of the Library of Michigan and the Library of Michigan Foundation with generous sponsorship from Target.